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XXI

Linen and Cotton Broad-Ware
Weavers

APOLOGY:

Humbly addressed to the

Gentlemen Manufacturers

O F

MANCHESTER,

And all others whom it may concern.

B Y

A Well-Wisher to Trade.

L I V E R P O O L:

Printed by ROBERT WILLIAMSON, near the *Exchange*,
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THE

Linen and Cotton Broad-Ware WEAVERS

APOLOGY, &c.

 LMIGHTY Providence having created Man with innumerable Infirmities, but at the same Time given him a supernatural Aid above all other Animal Beings by making him a rational, intelligent, and moral Agent, whereby he is capable in a great Measure to supply those Defects he was born into the World with, and without which Helps he would be the most miserable of the whole Creation.

THUS it hath been their Wisdom and Policy to form themselves into Nations, Communities, and Societies, not only for the Preservation of each other, but for the reciprocal Good of the Whole. And as it was found necessary to set on foot and establish several Arts and Sciences, without which they could not have long subsisted; these again thought proper to sub-divide themselves into different Classes, according to the different Trades or Occupations they followed, amongst which there is none more necessary for the Preservation of the human Species than that of Weaving, if we consider it in all its different Forms and Uses; for by it we are not only preserved from the Inclemency of the Weather, but our Bodies ornamented and decorated in

such a Manner as to render them more beautiful than any other Species of the whole Creation. But as there is a great many different Branches of Weaving, most, if not all, of which are essentially necessary to human Being, I shall at this Time confine myself to that of Linen and Cotton broad Ware Weaving, the Utility of which equals if not exceeds all others, if we consider the great Usefulness and Consumption of it with us at Home, and the immense Quantities that are exported to foreign Parts, by which this Kingdom in general doth not only reap unspeakable Benefits, but the Manufacturers of it in particular have acquired, in a short Space of Time, large and opulent Fortunes, such as has enabled them to vie with the best Gentlemen in the County. I could say a great deal with regard to the Manufactures of this Branch of Business, but, as I am not willing to give Offence to any of them, I shall content myself in apologizing a little in Behalf of the poor Mechanics, by whose Labour and Industry they have found Means to accumulate such large Fortunes.

IT must be allowed on all Hands, that the Mechanics and the rest of the poor labouring People are the most useful Members in the whole Community: It is them who are the Strength and Bulwark of the Nation: It is by them that the Land is cultivated and the Produce thereof brought to the Market, not only to supply the Needy and Necessitous with the common Necessaries of Life, but to feed and pamper the Extravagant and Voluptuous; a great many of whom may fairly be said to prey upon the very Vitals of the Poor. For by how much these fall short of the common Necessaries of Life (notwithstanding their hard Labour to procure it both for them, their Wives, and their little Ones) by so much do the great Oppressors wantonly prey upon the Lives of the industrious Labourer, and innocent Infants, whose Cries for Bread, though they are not able to affect the Hearts of the Oppressor, yet they may be

be assured that they are heard before the Throne of the Great Lord of the Universe, who will one Day visit their Cries upon their tyrannical Oppressors.

It is by the poor Mechanic's Ingenuity and Industry, and the Weavers in particular, that the Commerce of this Nation is upheld: It is owing to their Industry and Labour that the Manufacturers hath acquired immense Riches, purchased large Estates, and can live with almost equal Grandeur to a Peer of the Land. Yet how shocking must the Remembrance be to every impartial Person who will but seriously reflect that this useful and necessary Set of Mechanics, from whose Industry and hard Labour such immense Riches have been acquired, are at this Day the most wretched and miserable of all Mechanics, I mean such of them as have no Dependence but their Trade; for there are some who live upon small Estates of their own left them by their Forefathers, and others again, in the Country, who farm small Estates, and have learned this Branch of Business, either for a small Sum of Money, or a few Months Servitude, purely to employ their leisure Time from rural Employments: But such as these can never be reckoned upon an Average with those who have nothing but their Trade to subsist themselves and Families by. But indeed it may, with a great deal of Truth, be said that it is owing to the Conduct of such as these, and some others who have learned the Trade in the same Manner, that the poorer sort of Checque Weavers who have large Families cannot live as all human Creatures ought, in a rich, populous, and polite trading Country. For it is such as these, who, for some Seasons of the Year, have taken Work upon any Terms or Wages rather than stand still when they could find no Employment either in their Barns or Fields, and what they thus made a Practice of, others, who had no other Dependance but Weaving, were soon obliged to comply with. There are others who have
been

been of as great Detriment to the poor honest Mechanics as these, I mean Strangers and Foreigners, who have come into the Town and taken Parish Apprentices out of all Towns round about, purely for the Sake of a little Money, some of them to the Number of eight, ten, or twelve a-piece, and as such Numbers could not be kept without Employment, and they being but Children, and consequently could not perform Work as they ought, their Masters were obliged to take Work for them on such Terms as the Employers were pleased to propose to them; to make Amends for which, the poor Children have been as it were sold into worse Slavery, and harder Bondage, than the Negroes in our *English* Plantations in *America*; some of them have been, through such hard Slavery and worse Usage, rendered such shocking Objects of Commiseration and Charity, as to soften the Heart even of Tyranny and Oppression itself, and have thereby for ever after commenced either Cripples, Beggars, or Paupers, to the no small Detriment of the Landed Gentlemen.

BUT it hath been said by some Tradesmen in *Manchester*, that the Wages are as good now as they were forty Years ago. Now I am a Man upwards of sixty Years of Age, and have been employed in this Business for more than forty-five Years, and though I am far from encouraging or abetting Combinations, Riots or Tumults, to the Disturbance of the Peace, or Detriment of the fair Trader, (being the last Man that ever will be concerned in such Practices) yet I do *aver*, and can prove it to a Demonstration, that Wages are at this Day, near one Third lower than they were about Twenty, or Twenty-five Years ago. I shall only instance, what we call, Common Yard-wide Checque, which I believe may be reckoned a Standard, to Judge of all the Rest by, it being neither the Best nor Worst sort of Work amongst the Weaving Branch. That sort of Work was some Twenty or Twenty-five
Years

Years since warped only Eighty Yards, and the materials it was then made on, were so far better, that where a Man can now make one Yard, he would then have made One and an Half; and Wages Two Shillings at the Piece more then, than they are now, notwithstanding the Piece is now warped from Eighty-six to Ninety-six Yards, according to the different Rules in the several Warehouses in Town. Now it is plain from what hath been said, that here is at every Piece of Checque of this sort 6, 8, 10 or 16 Yards worked for nothing, and Two Shillings abated at the Whole, and Provisions more than one Third dearer now than they were then.

I COULD instance other sorts in the weaving Branch, such as Gowns of several sorts, and broad Checques, that are more than One Third lower in their Wages now than they were then. The Reason why their Prices have been thus reduced was owing, as I have shewed above, to such People as had not their whole Dependance on the Trade, and were willing to Work upon any Terms, rather than stand still, when they had no other Employment.

It may be proper in this Place to examine what a Journeyman Weaver of this Kind of Checque can bring Home to his Family of neat Earnings; I shall account for it thus, and appeal to every one who knows any Thing at all of Weaving for the Truth of what I shall say.

HE must be a tolerable good Hand that can work Half a Piece of this sort of Checque in a Week, which when done, comes to Six Shillings, out of which he must pay One Shilling for Pinwinding, and Six Pence for Loom-standing; and I shall reckon Three Pence per Week throughout the Year for Candle-light, so there Remains for him, of neat Money, Four Shillings and Three Pence, for House-Rent, Provisions and all other necessities

necessaries for him, his Wife, and perhaps Four or Five small Children. Now I will leave any one to judge how such a Family as this must live Seven Days, upon Four Shillings and Three Pence, even supposing it all to go for Provision, and set Rent, Fire, Cloaths, and all other necessaries aside, which will make better than Two Shillings of the Money, and must be had some how or other; and I do affirm that there is not one Weaver in Six, the Whole Trade through, that can make Half a Piece of this sort of Work in one Week.

I HAVE seen such a Family as this I am speaking on, (and can bring living Witnesses to testify it) that have lived Four Days out of Seven, upon nothing but Water Gruel without ever a Bit of Bread to it; and I doubt not but there are Hundreds of Families, who have formerly lived in good Reputation, have had for some Years past not much better Commons, and when Sickness, or any other Common Accidents of Life happens, are with Sorrow constrained to fly to the Parish for Relief, which hath at present raised the Poor Rates to such an Height, as in some Degree, to affect even the Landholders themselves.

Now I would not be thought, from what I have said, to be an Enemy to Trade and Commerce, being very sensible that it is one of the greatest Blessings this Nation ever enjoyed; and I likewise do acknowledge, that such Gentlemen as have, and now do, launch out their Money in Trade, do not only deserve the Thanks of the Public, but ought to reap the Benefit of their Labour, by acquiring moderate Fortunes for their Descendents: But then it must be allowed on all Hands, that the Poor Mechanic, by whose hard Labour and Industry, the Trade in general is supported and carried on, is, and ought to be entitled by the Laws of Reason and Equity, not only to comfortable Maintenance

nance, but to have it in his Power to lay up some Trifle for the Support of his Family, either in case of old Age, Sicknefs, Death, or any other Mortality, to which all Men are subject to, but I have not only shewn above, that it is at present entirely out of their Power so to do, but every one that is acquainted with them can witness, that the greatest Part of them cannot get the Common Necessaries of Life, without being beholden to the Town they belong to, or to their Charitable Neighbours.

THIS is the Reason, and it is to be hoped no One, who hath Common Charity to their Fellow-Creatures, can find fault, that the Linen and Cotton broad Wares Weavers, of *Manchester*, and Places adjacent, have universally agreed to conform to the following Rules, and Articles, calculated with no other Intent, than if possible, to retrieve the lost Character of one of the beautifullest Branches of Trade in this Town, and to set it (at least) on a Level with other Trades which are far inferior to it both for Beauty and Ingenuity. This is their Intention, and no other, being determined to give no Offence willfully, either to the Law, or to any particular Person or Persons whatsoever, but to take all the Care that lies in their Power, that their Masters be served with able, just, and faithful Workmen. And in order that this may be the more effectually done, they are determined, for the Future to admit none into their Trade but what have served a Legal Apprenticeship of Seven Years, by which Means they will be sure to have Workmen, who understand their Business and can do their Work without botching, or spoiling of it; and they are likewise determined for the Future to admit none into their Branch of Business who shall be found stealing, embezzling or purloining any Part of the Goods, or Materials to make Goods on, committed to their Care, as will appear by the following Articles, which they in the most humble Manner submit to the candid Consideration of the Gentlemen Manufacturers of *Manchester*, and all other charitable Gentlemen who wish well

(10)
to their Fellow-Creatures, hoping they will overlook
and pardon any Thing that they may think amiss, ei-
ther in these or the following Pages: And they do once
more take upon them to affirm, that they have no other
Intention but the reciprocal Good both of their Masters
and themselves, and that their fix'd Resolution is to be-
have as becomes dutiful and well-disposed Servants, and
as such they are, and for ever purpose to remain.



For

*For the better Preservation of the LINEN
and COTTON Broad Ware Branch of
WEAVING, in and about the Town
of MANCHESTER; and for pre-
venting Impositions in the said Trade.
(It is Agreed)*

A R T I C L E I.

THAT there shall be Four general Meetings yearly, of the Presidents and Stewards of each respective Box, (and Clerk if they think proper) at such Place in *Manchester*, as is agreed upon; viz. On the third Monday in *March*, the third Monday in *June*, the third Monday in *September*, and the third Monday in *December*, at ten o'Clock in the Forenoon.

A R T I C L E II.

THAT a Box or Chest be provided, with a convenient Number of Locks, also such Books as will be thought Necessary, and one of the Members shall be chosen as President, and some Person that is qualified for a Clerk, and such Number of Stewards as may be thought convenient.

A R T I C L E III.

THAT for the Ease of those Members who dwell in the Country, there shall be in every Parish, Township, or other large District, Boxes

fixed, at some noted Place in the same, and every Box to have a President, Clerk and such number of Stewards as may be thought convenient, with Books, Papers and other Things necessary.

A R T I C L E IV.

THAT the Members of each respective Box, shall be subject to the Rules and Regulations of the principal Box at *Manchester*, and by their President and Stewards, receive Instructions, and make such Returns, on the Days aforesaid, as may be thought Necessary.

A R T I C L E V.

THAT the President, Stewards and Clerk of the principal Box, and every other Box, shall meet Monthly, at the Places appointed for the same, not only to receive Contributions, (in order to prosecute Offenders against the Act of the 5th of *Eliz.*) but also communicate and inform the Society, of any Things necessary to be done, regulated or redressed.

A R T I C L E VI.

THAT Franks shall be made at *Manchester*, and kept in the principal Box, and delivered to other Boxes as they may have occasion for, and each Journeyman shall be obliged to have a Frank, or be accounted unfair; paying for the same Four-Pence. Each Frank to be numbered and registred. No Franks shall be delivered but at monthly Meetings.

A R T I C L E

ARTICLE VII.

THAT after the 16th of *January*, 1758, no Person shall be admitted as a regular Member, who has not served seven Years legally by Indenture, except the Children of Regular Members brought up and instructed by their Parents, and any of the Members of this Society, who shall have above Two Apprentices (exclusive of his own Children) at any one Time, (according to the above Act of the 15th of *Eliz.*) shall be reckoned an unfair Member ; but the Children of Undertakers, tho' they have not served by Indenture, yet they shall receive a Frank when they attain a proper Age, and if their Parents should happen to die before they be at the proper Age, shall be free to receive a Frank, if the President, Stewards, and sitting Members shall find it Necessary.

ARTICLE VIII.

THAT all Persons who are willing to be Members of this Society must enter their Names and be Subject to all the Rules and Regulations thereof, and also pay their Contributions on or before the 16th of *April*, 1758. or otherwise they will not be afterwards admitted, except upon such Terms as shall be agreed upon.

ARTICLE IX.

THAT every Member guilty of Stealing or Embezzling any part of his Work committed to his Care and Trust, upon Proof within Forty Days, shall be reckoned an unfair Member and not stood by.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE X.

THAT every Member guilty of the Breach of any of the Rules, Regulations and Orders now made, or which hereafter shall be concluded upon, or who neglects or refuses to pay their Contributions, shall be reckoned an unfair Member.

ARTICLE XI.

THAT the Impositions and Abuses offered by any Person whatsoever, upon any of the Regular Members hereof are to be redressed as soon as possible, and that the whole Society shall strictly observe such Orders, Regulations and Methods, as may the soonest and most effectually procure a Redress.

ARTICLE XII.

THAT every Undertaker, when Journeymen comes to Work with them, shall demand a Frank, which they are to keep during the Time of their Working there; and when they leave that Shop, they shall receive their Frank back, paying their Arrears (if any such there be) and making Satisfaction for any Damage in their Work, if any such be committed; any Undertaker refusing to return the Frank, without shewing a just Cause, shall be reckoned an unfair Member: Undertakers shall not employ any Person without a Frank, longer than the first monthly Meeting, on Penalty of paying five Shillings into the Box monthly. The Undertaker and Person employed shall give one another one Week's Notice at least, in order

to provide for themselves, or one Shilling and Six Pence in Money ; and if either Party be abused or imposed upon, no Money to be payed by the injured Person.*

A R T I C L E XIII.

THAT at the regular monthly Meetings or other emergent Calls concerning the Trade, every President, Stewards and Clerk, shall be allowed Four-Pence to bear their Expences, and the President, Stewards, and other Assistants being upon Trades Business one whole Day, shall be allowed one Shilling for their Day's Work, and Four-Pence to defray their Expences.

A R T I C L E XIV.

THAT the President and Stewards shall serve their several Offices one Quarter of a Year, and shall thereby be freed from serving any of the said Offices for the Space of one Year, except it is their own Choice, and by the Consent of the Society ; and any President for Steward, after being
duly

* The Frank mentioned in this, and the Sixth Article, is the Weavers Arms, engraved on a Copper Plate, with this Motto under, THIS IS TO CERTIFY THOSE IT MAY CONCERN, *That N. B. of in the County of LINEN and COTTON Broad-Ware Weaver, hath duly served an Apprenticeship of seven Years in the same Business, with N. B. Given at this Day of 1758.* And it is not only to show that they have served a Legal Apprenticeship, but to indemnify all Persons, they may go to Work with, from any Debts they may contract while with them, for they are to lodge it with them as soon as they go to Work, and are not to receive it back until they have paid all their Arrears. And no Person is to shop a Journeyman without his Frank, on Penalty of paying Five Shillings, as this Article directs.

duly chosen, refuses to serve their respective Offices, shall forfeit two Shillings and Six-Pence to the Box; and such Assistants as may be called upon refusing to obey, and they being able and in Health so to do, shall forfeit one Shilling, and Four-Pence to the Box.

A R T I C L E XV.

THAT every Undertaker's Child or Children, as soon as set down to Work at the said Branch of Trade shall be registered in their respective Box they belong to, in one Month after they are set down; and that every Member of this Society shall be free to Instruct his Wife in the said Branch.



ARTICLES

To be observed by the Society of LINEN
and COTTON Broad-Ware WEAVERS,
when met.

GENTLEMEN,

AT your Request, I have drawn up a few Articles, such as I hope will not only be beneficial to this Society, but a lasting Honour to the whole Trade. Before I produce them, It will be necessary to inform you, that before every Article, I have thought proper to give you my Arguments for the Use of such Article; and after all of them, I have answered all such Objections as at that Time occur'd to my Mind, and that with any shew of Reason may be made to such Article. This, I thought, would be the best Method, both to obviate a superfluity of Arguments, and that your Time might not be trifled with, and shall beg your Patience while I produce them. And,

First, I believe there is not in the known World, any Community, or Society of People, whether in a publick or private Station, but its Members are governed by such Laws as are best adapted to suit the Interest and Constitution of such People. And agreeable to this received Maxim of all Mankind, there is no particular Assembly or Society, whether polite or mechanical, but what have enacted such Laws or Articles, upon the just Observation of which, depend all their Welfare and Happiness. And in order that their Laws might be duly observed, and justly put in Execution, it hath been the Wisdom and Policy of all such Societies as above, to elect or chuse one or more in whom they might confide, to see that Justice was administered to all,

one of the most essential things that is wanted amongst us,
let it be ordered by

A R T I C L E I.

That a Chair-Man, or President be chose by the major Part of this Society, who shall serve such Office for three Months. During all which Time, he shall state all such Questions as are to be debated, and shall hear and regulate all Cases that may happen to come before this Society; and when regularly gone through, he shall then call a Poll, which the Clerk shall cast up, and make his Report to him. And any one that shall affront or molest him in his Office, shall be expelled the Society for two Months, or longer, if the Majority think fit.

Objection. To this Article, it may perhaps be objected, That it is investing one Man with too much Authority; to which I answer: That his Authority only has regard to this present Society; for with respect to the Trade, he hath not so much as another, having no Vote whilst in his office, but only to see that Order and Regularity be kept amongst the Members. And the Utility of such an Office, I have not only above shewn, but the common Practice of all Mankind justifies it; even a petty Jury has a Foreman; and without it, all would be Anarchy and Confusion.

Secondly, In order that Decency, Regularity, and Concord may be observed in all Affairs that may happen to come before this Society, and that all their Debates may be carried on with that Decency, Rule, and Order, that hath hitherto been wanting; and without which, all will, as it hath been, and always will be, nothing but Hurry, Bustle, and Confusion; and nothing done to the Satisfaction either of the Society themselves, or to the Persons concerned with them: To avoid which, let it be ordered by

A R T I C L E II.

That if any particular Township, District, or Division have

...any Article to be read, or any Thing they would have passed into an Article, the same shall be delivered in Writing, which the Clerk shall read; and it shall then be debated in the following Manner, viz. He that delivers it, shall stand up and speak first in Defence of it; and when he hath done, if any hath a Mind to second, or oppose him, he shall in like Manner stand up, but not 'till the other is set down. And no one shall offer to contradict any one while they are speaking, but all shall keep their Seats and Silence; and all Discourses shall be directed to the Chair-Man.

Objection. To this Article it perhaps may be objected, That there is too much Formality observed in it; but let it be observed, the want of Formality, and doing Things with some Kind of Regularity, is at present our greatest Misfortune, and in Time may prove the Ruin of this Society; for without Form and Order no Society can long subsist. And I humbly conceive, there is nothing of Superfluity in this last-mentioned Article; for as to delivering Complaints in Writing, if any one thinks it not worth his While to do it, how must your Time be trifled with in debating on Things which the Complainant did not think worthy writing down.

Thirdly, To avoid a Multiplicity of Laws, which always involves a Community or Society into the utmost Perplexity, and but too often is its Destruction, let it be ordered by

A R T I C L E III.

That at the Election of every Chair-man, the Clerk shall read over all the old Articles that any Ways regard the Trade, as likewise these present Articles; and all shall keep a profound Silence, while in reading, upon pain of being censured by the Chair-man. And before every Article, he shall mention the Time when it was made, and the Subject it treats upon.

Objection. As I cannot see where any Objection can lie against this Article, I shall only beg Leave to observe, That by thus regularly reading over our old Articles, they will not only be better understood, and inculcated in the Minds of those that are

make new ones ; and as I observed before, that a multiplicity of Laws is always the ruination of a Society, besides when a Law or Article hath Justice and Equity for its Basis, as I believe most, if not all our old Articles have, they cannot be made too publick, or too well known, especially when we consider, that the Interest of some hundreds of People in this Town are concerned in them ; and again, by letting our old Articles lie thus dormant, they at last become obliterated and quite forgot, and new ones are introduced in their stead, which fall infinitely short of the former.

Fourthly, That all Animosity, Intemperance, and Profaneness may be banished this Society, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE IV.

That if any one shall come into this Society drunk, or disorderly, or shall curse or swear, or offer to lay Wagers with any of its Members, he shall for every such Offence stand the Censure of the Chair-man, or be expelled the Society for two Months, or longer, if the Chair-man think proper.

Objection. As no Objection can be made against this Article, the Utility of it will best appear, if we consider, That Intemperance, Animosity, and Profaneness are the Pest and Vermin that gnaw out the very Vitals of all Society ; but Love and Unanimity are like the Spring and first Movers in a well regulated Piece of Machinery, and like them when broke, all goes to Ruin and Destruction ; therefore I hope no one will be against this Article.

Fifthly, And that Decency, Order, and good Manners may be preserved, and some Kind of Respect paid to this Society, not only by its Members, but by all those who may have occasion to transact any Business with it, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE V.

That each Member of this Society, as soon as he comes into the Club-Room, shall take his Seat in the following Manner

presentative of the first Township, District, or Division in the Roll, then the second, after him the Third, and so on 'till they are all seated; but no one shall sit down with his Hat on.

Objection. Tho' this Article may seem to have something of Novelty in it; yet I hope no reasonable Objection can be made to it. For if we consider this Society, not as a Company of Men met to regale themselves with Ale and Tobacco, and talk indifferently on all Subjects; but rather as a Society fitting to protect the Rights and Privileges of a Trade by which some thousands of People (I might say Families) subsist; and that no Violence or Encroachments be offered either to it or its Dependants. I say, when we view in this Light, and sure I am it deserves it, how awkward does it look to see its Members jumbled promiscuously one amongst another? some with their Hats on, and some with them off, talking indifferently on all Subjects.—I hope no Exception will be took at my Freedom of Speech, for I have no Intention to affront any one; besides this Decency and Regularity I am speaking of, tho' a Thing of Indifferency in itself, (*for an Alderman's Robe, a Judge's Ermine, and a Bishop's Mitre, are no Essentials to their Authority*) yet the like of this will cause a Reverence in the Beholder: And it will likewise be the only Means to cause it to be respected by its own Members; and while they do not pay a Regard to the Orders of their own Society, they must expect nothing but Ridicule and Burlesque from its Enemies.

Sixthly, As it is found necessary to have a Door-keeper and Cash-keeper for the Night, as likewise one to call for Liquor and collect the Shot; for the sake of quicker Dispatch, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE VI.

That the Chair-man shall for every Night nominate a Cash-keeper, and one to call for all the Liquor, and collect the Shot. The Door-keeper shall always be him that comes last in, with a Key, except the Chair-man shall think otherwise.

Thus,

presented you with six Articles, which are in their own Nature short, plain, and easy to be remembered; and tho' I have not the Vanity to imagine they are infallible, yet I am morally confident, that these, or some thing like them, will be the greatest Benefit to this Society (and consequently to the whole Trade) of any Thing that hath been done for it in my Time.

Objection. But I am now aware of a grand Objection that may possibly be made to the whole, and that is, That it will be acting too much against Common Law, to which I answer, That we have hitherto been acting more so, than we shall, when once Unity, Order, and Decency is established amongst us. For when Gentlemen and Magistrates of the Law see a Trades-Society acting upon Principles of Justice, and ordering all their Affairs by the strictest Rules of Decency, they will rather revere than punish such a Society. On the other Hand, when a Company of Men are collected together at Random, making Articles, without knowing why, or ever considering the Consequences that may ensue from them; and as ready to break through all others, for any little Mistake or Prejudice that may be conceived either against them, or any one concerned in them; dealing out Threats without Reason, and discoursing without Order: Well may they then be looked upon as Riote's in the strictest Sense; and it gives Reason sufficient to Men of Learning and Credit, to decline joining such a Society. But if it be once established upon an honourable Foundation, and hath *Justice* for its Basis, and *Honour* and *Concord* for all its Actions; then will those Men (who before thought it a Scandal to be amongst them) think it an Honour to be elected one of its Members.

Give me leave, Gentlemen, before I conclude, to recommend to you once more, Unity, Concord, and brotherly Love; and think nothing too difficult to be done, that tends to promote Justice, Regularity, and Order. Let it be remembered, that one of the most honourable of Societies, and a great many worshipful Companies, now held by Charter in this Nation, had once no better a Beginning, and acted as much contrary to Law as this.—In short, I know nothing too hard for Men to do, who guide all their Actions by Reason, and have Resolution and Courage to persist. But if we should here fall short, and let drop what hath already been done, (which I am afraid is but too likely, without preserved by such Articles as above) the Enemies to our Trade would then, like Water long pent up, whose Banks are broke down, rush out with the greater Fury.

To

Articles, through the mean Capacity of their Author; for if they be found necessary, and answer the End for which they were wrote, I shall think my Pains well bestowed, having nothing in View but the good of a Trade, by which both I (and for ought I know my Posterity after me) must get their Livelihood. But, if rejected, I shall content myself with thinking that I have attempted to risque from Ignominy and Scandal, one of the beautifulest Branches of Trade, and to which, I shall always wish the utmost Prosperity.

F I N I S.

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